

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 HEW-08 AID-20 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 FDRE-00 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01 RSR-01

/078 W

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R 141338Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6148

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 623

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, NG

SUBJECT: EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON HEALTH LEVELS IN NIGER

REF: NIAMEY 2409; OUAGA 1563

1. INITIAL AND STILL INCOMPLETE FINDINGS CDC TEAM INVESTIGATION NIGER PLUS NON QUANTIFIED OBSERVATIONS OF MISSION PERSONNEL, INCLUDING PEACE CORPS PHYSICIAN, INDICATE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HEALTH LEVELS SEDENTARY AND NOMADIC GROUPS AS A RESULT OF DROUGHT.

2. SEDENTARY POPULATION (ABOUT 90 PCT OF TOTAL POPULATION IN NIGER) GENERALLY ABLE OBTAIN MINIMUM REQUIREMENT CALORIES ALTHOUGH THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS IN SOME OUTLYING VILLAGES WHERE SUPPLY PROBLEMS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT. BASE LINE DATA IS LACKING, BUT IT APPEARS THAT NUMBER PERSONS FROM SEDENTARY GROUP CURRENTLY SUFFERING AVITAMINOSIS CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN "NORMAL" FOR NIGER. DEATHS FROM COMPLICATION OF MEASLES AMONG SEDENTARY GROUPS PROBABLY ONLY SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN IN PAST.

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3. NOMADS ON OTHER HAND HAVE BEEN HIT ESPECIALLY HARD BY DROUGHT.

NIGERIEN NOMADS WHO HAVE REACHED MAJOR CENTERS OF DISTRIBUTION (AGADEZ, BILMA, IFEROUANE, ARLIT) ARE NOW RECEIVING SAME LEVEL ASSISTANCE AS THEIR SEDENTARY COMPATRIOTS AND THEIR GENERAL HEALTH LEVEL SLOWLY IMPROVING. NIGERIEN NOMADS WHO SOUGHT RELIEF BY SETTLING AROUND SMALLER OR MORE REMOTE VILLAGES SEEM TO RECEIVE ABOUT SAME AS VILLAGERS ALTHOUGH THERE ARE REPORTS LOCAL LEVEL DISCRIMINATION. FOR 40-50,000 NAMADS ESTIMATED BY GON TO BE IN NIGER FROM MALI, SITUATION HAS GENERALLY BEEN SEVERE. THEY ARE NOT GIVEN FREE GRAIN BY GON AND IN MOST INSTANCES HAVE TO BEG, BUY OR BARTER IN ORDER OBTAIN FOOD. RED CROSS AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS HELPING SOME MALIEN NOMADS ESPECIALLY THOSE CAMPED AROUND NIAMYE, TILABERI, AYOROU, BUT HAVE HAD TO BE CAREFUL LEST THEY GIVE APPEARANCE FAVORING MALIENS OVER NIGERIENS-- A CRITICISM RECENTLY VOICED BY PRESIDENT DIORI. NOMADIC GROUPS AS WHOLE, BUT PARTICULARLY MALIENS, SHOW EVIDENCE MALNUTRITION IN VARYING DEGREES. DEATH RATE OVER PAST YEAR IN SOME NOMAD GROUPS AS RESULT DROUGHT RELATED DEPRIVATION AROUND 15 PCT LEVEL. FIRST AIRDROP OF GRAIN IN NEGER (SEPTTEL) PLANNED FOR NORTHERN OUALLAM AREA WHERE LARGE NUMBERS NOMADS CAMPED AND WHERE INITIAL CDC SURVEY INDICATES HIGH INCIDENCE OF MALNUTRITION.

4. CDC TEAM EXPECTS COMPLETE NIGER SURVEY AROUND END AUGUST. MI ISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH TOLD CHARGE HE INTERESTED TEAMS'S FINDINGS SINCE GON HAS UP TO NOW HAD LITTLE EMPIRICAL INFORMATION ON EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON HEALTH LEVELS. BUCHE

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